DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 150 495 CG 012 162

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TITLE BORN FREE: An Applied Developmental Intervention to Reduce Career-Related Sex-Role Stereotyping in Elementary, Secondary, and Higher Education Settings.
PUB DATE 27 Aug 77
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (San Francisco, California, August 26-30 1977). For related document see CG 012 160 and CG 012 161

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Choice; *Change Agents; *Developmental Programs; *Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Intervention; Program Descriptions; Sex Role; *Sex Stereotypes; *Socialization; Student School Relationship
IDENTIFIERS *Project BORN FREE

ABSTRACT

Project BORN FREE is a multidimensional effort to intervene in educational institutions to help reduce career-related sex-role stereotyping. It also attempts to expand career options through increasing faculty and parent awareness of their own socialized attitudes and behaviors and their impact on students. It is an indirect intervention, focusing on developmental influences within educational institutions and throughout the life span. It is also a change agent project (helping teachers, counselors, parents and administrators work together for change) and a training project (creating print and videotape materials and training workshops). This article explains the total conception of the project, describing the intervention programs for the first and second years, and outlining some of the conceptual frameworks which underlie the project. (Author/BP)

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BORN FREE: An Applied Developmental Intervention To Reduce Career-Related Sex-Role Stereotyping In Elementary, Secondary, and Higher Education Settings

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August, 1977

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Paper presented as part of a Symposium on "Educational Intervention to Promote Female Development--A Life Span View," American Psychological Association National Convention, San Francisco, California, August 27, 1977.

CG 012 162

Unlike the three preceding interventions, Project BORN FREE is an indirect one focusing on not only female development but male development as well. As Hawley (1975) has stated so well, one sex cannot redefine itself without affecting the other. A major assumption of BORN FREE is that if changes are to be effected to open up options for women, attention also must be paid to ways in which men are socialized to make career decisions and to the interrelationship of decisions of men and women about work and family. BORN FREE is an attempt to influence the influencers of the career development of women and men--particularly educators and parents.

It should be mentioned at the outset that career development is viewed in this paper and in the project in the broad sense of a continuous, lifelong, person-centered process of developmental experiences focused on self-direction in educational-vocational and life style options; it includes not only the paid work role but the integration of work roles with other life roles.

Both women and men are limited in their educational, vocational and life style, i.e. career options by the sex role stereotyping which pervades society. These limits do not occur at one point in time but are part of the career socialization process which occurs over the life span, through which men and women receive different messages about what options are available to or desirable for them. One of the outcomes of this socialization is the occupational and educational segregation of which we are well aware.

Since many of the messages given and received are nonconscious ones, often based on pervasive stereotypes of work and family which are no longer congruent with reality, it becomes important for psychologists, counselors, and other psychoeducators concerned about student development to not only increase their own awareness of the sex role stereotyping and bias which exist but to intervene in their educational system to help make it more facilitative of student growth and development in general and career development in particular.

A Multidimensional Model

Project BORN FREE is one multidimensional effort to intervene in educational institutions to help reduce career-related sex-role stereotyping and expand career options through increasing faculty and parent awareness of their own socialized attitudes and behaviors and their impact on students. Because of the enormous scope of the project and its early stage, only a descriptive progress and process report can be presented at this time. Basically it is a university-based collaborative effort of counseling psychologists and counselors, teachers and professors, and administrators in 14 educational institutions to reduce career-related sex role stereotyping in their own institutions. The developmental continuum includes three elementary, junior and senior high schools; two community colleges and one vocational technical institute; one small liberal arts college and a liberal arts unit of a large university.

Several descriptors might be used to describe BORN FREE: it is developmental, focusing on career development over the life span and on developmental influences of educational institutions; it is consultative, i.e. an indirect intervention with participants fulfilling roles as both internal and external consultants; it is collaborative, involving not only the several institutions mentioned but collaboration across levels, roles and institutions; it is a change agent project, with teachers, counselors, parents, and administrators working together to bring about change in this area; and it is a training project with a major focus on the creation of print and video tape materials and training workshops designed to implement the model.

A Concept and Process

BORN FREE is a two-year federal project, funded under the Women's Educational Equity Act, in which counseling psychologists are consulting with educators and parents to help reduce the stereotyping which limits career options. Perhaps it is

more important that BORN FREE be thought of as a concept and a process than as a project. It is a concept based on several assumptions, some of which already have been mentioned, that both women and men face barriers in their career development because of stereotypic attitudes about sex roles. It further assumes that educational institutions can be more responsive to individual student needs, preferences, and talents through making educators and parents aware of the attitudes, behaviors, and institutional practices which may affect career options.

It is a process of helping faculties in these institutions engage in self examination and identify the best strategies to achieve BORN FREE goals. To make the task easier, a number of strategies have been developed as part of the project from which faculty can adapt or choose those most appropriate for a particular population or setting. They are available in three training packets, one for each level--elementary, secondary, and higher education--along with 10 color video tapes, of which only one has been completed to date.

Intervention Plan

First Year. The primary goal of Project BORN FREE is to change educational environments in ways which will encourage students to more freely explore, choose, and plan for a wider range of career options than they traditionally have been led to expect. The method of change includes identifying staff in each institution committed to the goals of BORN FREE. Each institution completed its own systems diagnosis to determine its needs--and even generate needs--in this area. Some of the facilitators and inhibitors of career development were identified in each institution. Findings of the self-study were combined with findings from a review of the literature completed at each level to determine what we know about career socialization. Clinical data gathered in each institution combined with the findings of the career development literature search provided a base for developing training materials for each level. Developmental themes were identified as a base for the 10 color video tapes, including such themes as achievement and aspi-

ration, choices, changes, and male/female socialization.

While field site staff and university staff were collaborating on creation of the career development training materials, field site staff began acting as change agents in their own institutions. Because of the commitment and creativity of staff, some strategies for change were well under way before the training materials were available. This was one of the early unanticipated effects of the project.

From the initial part-time staff of 55, the intent was to create a multiplier effect with 40 additional staff selected from participating institutions to experience a two-week intensive workshop. That workshop was held in the summer of 1977, with participants field testing the training materials developed during the first year and creating their own implementation plans for the second year. Partial analysis of the workshop evaluations indicates a high level of involvement, commitment, and satisfaction on the part of the participants, as well as a real eagerness to use the training materials in their own settings.

Second Year. The second year of the project is considered critical, with a great deal of emphasis on implementation, consultation, and change process activity. Development work will continue with the other nine half hour color video tapes to be completed along with accompanying viewers' guides. The three training packets will be revised after field testing. A national training institute, modeled after the first one, will be held in late spring with 100 leader-trainers to be selected, two from each state. Again, the multiplier effect is expected to operate with the state BORN FREE trainers expected to make a commitment to implement project goals and become a resource person in their own states. The 10 video tapes will be shown on public television, and a more concerted effort will be made to involve parents in the project.

While there are no formal plans to extend BORN FREE beyond the second year, it is hoped that the print and video materials and the training model developed

will be disseminated so that other schools, colleges, and vocational institutes interested in expanding career options through reducing sex role stereotyping will be able to take advantage of the experience--and the mistakes--of the 14 institutions in the first two years.

The remainder of this paper briefly describes two of the three conceptual frameworks which form the basis of Project BORN FREE: the career development model, the consultative model, and the change process and evaluation model. Because of time limitations, the consultation model is only alluded to here.

The Career Development Model

The career development model which forms the basis for Project BORN FREE is the Career Development Curriculum (CDC) created by Tennyson, Hansen, Klaurens, and Antholz (1975). The broad-based model draws from developmental psychology, learning theory, and career development theory and research in providing a developmental framework for structuring student career competencies and skills at each level of the educational continuum. It presents the concept of "career management tasks," mastery of which can help individuals gain a greater sense of agency or self direction in their own lives.

BORN FREE goes beyond the CDC and introduces a hypothesis of "career socialization," defined as "the differential experiences and processes used to prepare females and males for the educational, occupational, and lifestyle roles and choices society has defined as being appropriate for their particular sex" (Hansen, 1976). Some of the "inhibitors" and "facilitators" of that socialization process are explored through clinical observations by staff in the educational institutions and through a selected review of literature at each of the three levels. The hypothesis is explicated in the three reviews of literature which identify some of the salient variables in career sex role socialization at each developmental level. These include psychological variables such as self esteem and self concept, sense of agency or locus of control, achievement motivation and expectancy, and

career information processing; environmental variables such as occupational and educational opportunities; influencers such as parents, schools, and media; institutional barriers or inhibitors which limit career development; and interventions which facilitate that development. Several of these variables form the basis for the video tapes, which consist of real people from a variety of age, race, sex, and socioeconomic backgrounds talking about their career aspirations, their socialization, their choices, and changes in their lives. The inhibitors and facilitators also form the basis for two of the tapes with IF segments (inhibitors/facilitators) identified in the systems diagnosis providing actual critical incidents and examples of behavior to which viewers can respond.

The three training packets developed at the elementary, secondary, and higher education levels are based on a set of goals and objectives identified by level staff and drawn from the CDC, the literature review variables and the systems analysis. An important characteristic of the staff development modules is the attempt to help faculty internalize the problem by examining their own career socialization. The learning strategies in the packets provide numerous experiential and some cognitive activities through which faculty and parents can learn to understand the events, people, and attitudes which influenced their own career development--i.e. their own inhibitors and facilitators. It is expected that such internalization will help them to "own the problem" and to become more positive facilitators of student career development by being willing to examine how their own attitudes, values and behaviors affect the life options of students.

Change Process and Evaluation Model

Since BORN FREE is an approach to bringing about change in educational institutions, built into the fabric of the model was attention to the question, "How do we bring about enduring change in educational institutions?" As Kurpius and Thomas (n.d.) have pointed out, "Both university and public school personnel have been remarkably unsuccessful in initiating and maintaining innovations in ways consistent with their original purposes and goals to produce effective educational

programs" (p. 1). We are well aware of the number of funded programs which are highly visible and in high gear until the funds run out; then it is often back to "business as usual." Cognizance of the tendency of institutions to want to maintain or return to the status quo, BORN FREE built into its training and consultation model for staff an emphasis on tools for being a change agent.

Two major models of change have contributed to the project, the Havelock (1973) change agent's guide to innovation in education and the Rand Corporation model for evaluating change process in federally funded innovative programs (Mann, 1976).

Change Agent Model

The six-step Havelock model for building a relationship with the system, diagnosing the problem, analyzing resources, choosing a solution, gaining acceptance, and maintaining the innovation provided a manageable and logical framework for field site staff to think about affecting their system and influencing colleagues and parents.

It was recognized that change in the area of sex roles and career options can be threatening to some individuals because it challenges the norms by which they have learned to behave. A real problem, besides the major task of developing training materials and tapes, is one of motivating faculty and parents to want to change and to recognize that a problem exists for which training can be helpful. Creating awareness and motivating to action are primary but difficult goals which require not only needs assessment but need-creation and need-generation. Data from the systems diagnoses and literature reviews were used to help create awareness of the problem and the need for change. One of the basic principles of change process is that one does not offer a solution before people recognize there is a problem. Because of the resistance to change and especially to change regarding sex roles, field site staff in each institution set limited goals. They recognized they might reach only 5% of the staff in some institutions, perhaps 15% in another.

The project has promulgated a philosophy that "small is beautiful" and that the degree of change which they are able to effect in their own institutions may be from waves to ripples.

But why should faculty or parents choose to change in the area of career related sex role stereotyping? Rewards for participation are an important part of any change process project but are not always possible to achieve. Staff and parents rightfully ask, "What's in it for me?" The major rewards/incentives offered for participation in Project BORN FREE are 1) it may help faculty do a better job of achieving the superordinate goals and values of schools in a democratic society--fuller development of individuals, equality of access and opportunity, and freedom of choice; and 2) it will provide faculty with an opportunity for significant personal growth. While the climate for change in this area is supported today by many legal mandates such as Title IX and Affirmative Action, to many individuals the more positive approach of career development and the more human message of BORN FREE are more acceptable incentives for change than legal mandates.

Other change process principles have been incorporated into BORN FREE to fill in the gaps of the Havelock model. For example, in the systems diagnosis, field site staff were asked to analyze their own position in the system and to identify what was already occurring in career development, sexism, affirmative action and other related areas. They were asked to identify a support group of people interested in or committed to BORN FREE goals as well as those resistant. Field site and administrative commitment to the project was sought before the proposal was written, and ideas from the collaborating institutions were incorporated into the proposal. Because it is well known that people are more likely to use what they help create, field site staff have been deeply involved every step of the way, in the systems diagnosis, the training modules, and video tapes. Thus they are not just using university materials in their programs but materials which they "own" and in which they have a vested interest.

Institutional Change Model

The Rand Corporation in its massive study has examined 293 federally funded innovative projects and completed intensive case study reports on 29 of these (Mann, 1976). An interview strategy with these selected institutions produced a base for identifying the most successful and least successful innovations. The stages of the Rand model include initiation, implementation, and outcomes and continuation.

BORN FREE is using the Rand framework for its process evaluation, looking primarily at institutional characteristics which are influencing achievement of project goals. As must be evident, it is extremely difficult to obtain data on a project of this scope and nature without some subjectivity, and the approach is of necessity exploratory. Because the first year's work has been largely devoted to development, evaluative data at this stage are largely formative. Short-range effects of the two-week training institute and the materials are being analyzed, but it is too early to assess long range impact on trainees or institutions. At present we are trying to learn something about the process and variables which determine the varying degrees of success of the project in different institutions. Data have been gathered through interviews with project managers, local administrators, field site staff, and university staff; through process and activity logs of staff activities and problems encountered; through critical incidents in the systems diagnosis; and through questionnaires. Among the areas examined are the following:

1) What previous experience did each institution have with innovation in general and with career development and sexism programs? What climate for change exists?

2) What are the institutional reasons for involvement in BORN FREE? What kind of support and commitment was there from the beginning? What kind of support has developed?

3) What is the role of key persons in the institution? What difference does administrative support at what level seem to make? Does it make any difference

whether the change agents are teachers or counselors? internal or external consultants?

4) What implementation strategies are being used at different levels with what effects and with what difficulties encountered?

5) What are the indicators of change in the various participating institutions and of resistance to change?

6) What are the unanticipated events which may hinder or facilitate project implementation? For example, the economic cutbacks in schools have had an enormous effect on staff morale, and bread and butter security issues have understandably overshadowed the human development issues presented in BORN FREE.

Summary

This is a very brief description of Project BORN FREE, an almost herculean effort to bring about educational change in career related sex role stereotyping. It is an indirect intervention including systems analyses, literature reviews, a conceptual model of career development, developmental training packets, video tapes, and change process strategies; all are designed for faculty and parents at every level of the educational continuum in a developmental framework of male and female career socialization. Besides being a federally funded project, BORN FREE is a concept and a process which could be adapted by other educational institutions. It is a concept which says that individuals are born free of the stereotypes about what boys and girls can do with their lives and that these attitudes about life career options and choices are affected by the significant influencers in their lives, of which educators and parents are a part. It is a process by which educators and parents who are willing to examine how their own attitudes, values and behaviors inhibit or facilitate student career options can experience meaningful personal growth and help educational institutions change in ways which will promote more positive growth and development of both women and men. The change process strategies are designed to Build Options, Reassess Norms, and Free

Roles through Educational Equity. It is an endeavor worthy of the attention of psychologists, counselors and others interested in psychoeducational intervention for human growth.

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